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USTR Zoellick Statement Regarding Crane TPA Bill

WASHINGTON - United States Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick today issued the following statement regarding the introduction of a Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) bill by Congressman Phil Crane (R-IL), Chairman of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade:

“Expanded trade benefits consumers, farmers, workers and businesses. Open markets also promote economic and political freedom around the world. Since 1994, the Executive Branch has lacked the authority it needs from Congress to negotiate key trade agreements. Meanwhile, our trading partners have moved ahead with numerous free trade agreements that put U.S. exporters at a competitive disadvantage, and block opportunities and choices for Americans.

“Trade Promotion Authority is necessary to strengthen the hand of the United States at the negotiating table. The President must have the ability to sign good trade deals that expand U.S. access to overseas markets. Trade Promotion Authority also provides a framework for strengthened consultation with the Congress at key negotiating stages.

“I applaud and thank Chairman Crane for introducing legislation today to provide Trade Promotion Authority. The bill would give the President the necessary authority to pursue the negotiating objectives set forth in his ‘2001 International Trade Legislative Agenda,’ an important part of his economic plan to expand prosperity and opportunity for Americans. I appreciate Chairman Crane’s leadership in introducing this bill. The formal legislative process has begun, and I look forward to working with Members of both parties in the Congress as we move ahead.”

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